

### QS World University Rankings: Sustainability 2025

QS Quacquarelli Symonds has released the third edition of the 'QS World University Rankings: Sustainability 2025'.

#### Key Points

- ❖ The rankings have been compiled using a methodology of indicators designed to measure an institution's ability to tackle the world's greatest environmental, social and governance (ESG) challenges.
- ❖ In the ranking **University of Toronto is the top university for sustainability in the world** this year, ranking ahead of ETH Zurich in second place.
- ❖ University of California, Berkeley (UCB) is the top university in the US for sustainability, sharing third place globally with Lund University in Sweden.

#### Indian Universities ranking

- ❖ A total of **78 Indian universities have featured in the 2025 QS Sustainability Rankings**, with nine of the top 10 institutions in the country improving their ranking this year and 21 new institutions making an entry.
- ❖ **Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Delhi** is the top university from India to rank in the QS World University Rankings, Sustainability 2025. The institute has an overall score of 80.6 and **ranks 171 globally, jumping 255 places**.
- ❖ The second rank is occupied by **Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur (IIT-KGP) with an overall score of 78.6 and global rank of 202**.

- ❖ **Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay (IITB)** ranks at the third place with an overall score of 76.1 and a global rank of 234.
- ❖ **IIT Kanpur ranks at the fourth place (Ranked 245)** and IIT Madras (ranked 277) is at the fifth place. University of Delhi and Indian Institute of Science rank at the sixth and seventh place respectively.

### India's first Hyperloop Test Track

On December 6, 2024, IIT Madras unveiled a 410-meter Hyperloop test track, a first in India.

#### Key Points

- ❖ **IIT Madras Avishkar Hyperloop team, and TuTr** (an incubated startup at the institute) are leading this project.
- ❖ Hyperloop technology is **designed to revolutionise transportation by allowing pods to travel at speeds of up to 1,100 km/h**.
- ❖ These pods will move through low-pressure tubes, creating a frictionless environment that will not only increase the speed of travel but also improve energy efficiency.
- ❖ The operational speed of the system is expected to be around 360 km/h, making it one of the fastest modes of transportation.

#### Way Forward

- ❖ Hyperloop technology works by **using pressurised pods to carry passengers** in a low-pressure environment, ensuring minimal friction and allowing for incredible speeds.

- ❖ Each pod can carry **24-28 passengers** and will travel directly between destinations without intermediate stops, providing a fast and efficient way to travel.
- ❖ This successful completion of the test track is a **significant step in India's ambitions to develop cutting-edge transportation solutions.**
- ❖ The Hyperloop system represents a leap towards faster, more sustainable transportation, potentially transforming the way people travel in the future.

The Mumbai-Pune corridor has been selected as the first full-scale Hyperloop project in India. The project promises to drastically reduce the travel time between the two cities to just 25 minutes, a journey that typically takes over three hours by road.

### Person In News- Appointments

#### Devajit Saikia

He has been made the **acting secretary of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI)**, replacing Jay Shah (who has taken over as International Cricket Council's new chairman from 1 December 2024). Saikia is a former first-class cricketer, he **was already the BCCI joint-secretary.**

Saikia will remain BCCI's acting secretary till elections are held for the post in September 2025.



### Person In News- Sports

#### Sunny Dhillon

He was a former assistant coach who has been **banned by ICC from all cricket for six years.**

An Anti-Corruption Tribunal found him guilty of breaching the Emirates Cricket Board's (ECB) Anti-Corruption Code.

### Person In News- Worldwide

#### Mohammed al-Bashir

He has been appointed as the **caretaker prime minister of Syria.**



Syria is a country in **West Asia located in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Levant.**

It is bounded by the Mediterranean Sea to the west, Turkey to the north, Iraq to the east and southeast, Jordan to the south, and Israel and Lebanon to the southwest.

**Damascus** is the capital and largest city of Syria.

### Awards/ Titles

#### National Panchayat

#### Awards 2024

- ❖ On 11th December 2024, President of India, conferred National Panchayat Awards to **45 awardees selected across various categories, recognizing their exemplary contributions to the themes of sustainable and inclusive development**
- ❖ The awards ceremony was organized by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj.



- ❖ **The National Panchayat Awards 2024 encompass categories such as:** the Deen Dayal Upadhyay Panchayat Satat Vikas Puraskar, Nanaji Deshmukh Sarvottam Panchayat Satat Vikas Puraskar, Gram Urja Swaraj Vishesh Panchayat Puraskar, Carbon Neutral Vishesh Panchayat Puraskar, and Panchayat Kshamta Nirmaan Sarvottam Sansthan Puraskar.
- ❖ These awards are pivotal in recognizing and encouraging Panchayats for their efforts in poverty alleviation, health, child welfare, water conservation, sanitation, infrastructure, social justice, governance, and women empowerment.
- ❖ The recognition **provided through these awards aims to inspire other Panchayats to adopt best practices and contribute to the holistic development of rural India.**
- ❖ On the themes:
  - **Child-Friendly Panchayat**: Bhartaul Gram Panchayat of UP
  - **Carbon Neutral Vishesh Panchayat Puraskar**: Milak Amawti of UP received an award.

### Sports

#### 10th Asia Pacific Deaf Games 2024

- ❖ The event took place in **Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, from December 1 to 8, 2024.**
- ❖ The India delegation of 69 athletes, 15 coaches and support staff participated in the games across seven disciplines: **Athletics, Badminton, Chess, Judo, Table Tennis, Taekwondo, and Wrestling.**
- ❖ India in total bagged 55 medals (8 Gold, 18 Silver and 29 Bronze) from the Games.
- ❖ India finished fifth overall in the 21-team tournament.

### Miscellaneous

- ❖ On 11th Dec 2024, **Gita Jyanti was celebrated.** Gita Jayanti is a sacred day for Hindus, commemorates the birth of the Srimad Bhagavad Gita, the timeless scripture delivered by Lord Krishna to Arjuna on the battlefield of Kurukshetra.
- ❖ Hamara Shauchalay: Hamara Samman (HSHS) Campaign Concludes on 10th December on Human Rights Day. It was a nationwide campaign **launched by the Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation** on November 19, World Toilet Day. The tagline of the campaign was “**शौचालय संवारे, जीवन निखारे**”.
- ❖ **5th edition of Amazon SMBhav 2024 took place in New Delhi.** It brought together thought leaders, industry stalwarts, entrepreneurs, and policymakers under one roof.
  - SMBhav Venture Fund, launched in 2021, was a focal point this year, with an expanded \$350 million allocation targeting manufacturing and AI StartUps.
- ❖ According to data from the **Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), the cumulative amount of FDI**, including equity, reinvested earnings and other capital, stood at USD 1,033.40 billion for the April 2000-September 2024 period.



- Major FDI contributors include Mauritius (25%), Singapore (24%), and the U.S. (10%)

- America's most trusted dictionary, Merriam-Webster, has chosen "polarization" as its 2024 Word of the Year. The term means division.



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